

Three-year checkup time

Talk to your child's doctor or nurse about any questions or concerns you have about his health or development.

- Bring his Lifetime Immunization Record card and Childhood Health Record booklet with you.
- Be sure that his immunizations are up-to-date and recorded accurately. You will need his immunization record when you register him for preschool and child care.

For information on the recommended immunization schedule, talk with your child's doctor or nurse or call your local health department. Visit www.doh.wa.gov/immunization/schoolandchildcare for preschool and child care requirements.

Healthy teeth for a healthy child

Check your child's teeth often. Lift the lip and look at the front and back of teeth near the gums. If you see any white or brown spots, or gum problems, call your dentist or doctor.

Baby teeth are just as important as permanent teeth. They help your child speak well, chew, and they hold space for adult teeth. Some baby teeth stay in the mouth until age 12.

- Brush after breakfast and after the last meal or snack of the day. Have an adult apply a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste to the brush. Be sure your child spits out any excess toothpaste.
- Have a hard time getting your child to brush? Stay cheerful and lead by example. Brush together and make it part of every day. Remember, she will need the help of an adult until age 8 to remove all the sticky plaque and germs that cause cavities.
- If your child likes you to brush her teeth, begin



gently flossing the sides of any teeth that touch.

Do not force your child to let you floss. Brushing all her teeth is more important at this age.

- Do not let your child run or play with anything in her mouth. If a dental injury occurs, call your dentist or doctor right away.

Using the bathroom is an important skill

Your child will be proud when he uses the toilet and may want to share the good news. Encourage him and let him know you are proud of him. Remember though that some children aren't fully toilet-trained until they are school age. Children who stay dry during the day may still wet at nap-time or at night. Stressful situations, like a new child care provider or a move, may cause a toilet-trained child to begin wetting the bed again. Encourage your child to use the bathroom before going to sleep. Once he regularly wakes up dry, try switching from a diaper or pull-ups to underwear at night. If he wets the bed, let him know that it's okay. Don't get angry. Help him change into dry clothes right away.

Begin to teach your child about being safe

The best way to keep your young child safe is to make sure she is always with you or another adult you trust. At age three, your child is not able to tell the difference between who is a stranger and who is a friend. Make sure your child knows that she should always check with you before she goes anywhere with anyone.

To read the free booklet

"Personal Safety for Children:

A Guide for Parents" visit:

http://bit.ly/Child_Personal_Safety

(Most libraries in Washington State offer free Internet access.)

Keeping Your Child Healthy and Safe

Make time for active play

Experts recommend that children this age spend **at least** one hour every day running, jumping, and climbing in a safe area. This kind of activity helps your child's body become strong and well-coordinated. Active play during the day also helps her sleep well at night.

You can play active games together indoors or outside.

- Dig with plastic shovels, pails, and cups.
- Read together and act out the stories in books.
- Play "dress-up" and "make-believe" with scarves, shoes, and other clothing.
- Dance, play hide-and-seek, or take a walk.

Visit the **Active Bodies, Active Minds** website at <http://depts.washington.edu/tvhealth/> for ideas to cut down on screen time and be active!

Set limits on "screen time"

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children over age 2 have no more than one to two hours of screen time per day. If your child spends too much time playing with computers, tablets, smart phones, video games, and TV, he is not doing other things that help him learn and be healthy, like reading and playing outside. When he does watch TV or play games, educational, non-violent choices are the best. Ask other caregivers to limit his screen time, and to only choose programs and games made for kids his age.

Children need plenty of sleep

At age three, children need 10 to 12 hours of sleep at night and may need a nap or quiet time after lunch. Help your child get to bed at the same time each night. Start a regular bedtime routine if you don't already have one. This could be taking a bath, brushing her teeth, reading a short book, then cuddling before turning out the light. Talk with your health care provider if your child often has trouble getting to sleep.

Your three-year-old's emotions

There may be a lot of changes in your child's life right now - a new child care or preschool, potty training, maybe even getting a new bed. This can be stressful and may lead to tantrums. Help your child name his emotions. This may help him feel more in control and help him to calm down more quickly.

When to change from a car seat to a booster seat

Be careful not to switch from a car seat to a booster seat or seat belt too soon. Keep your child in a forward-facing car seat with a harness until she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. The harness keeps her secure during normal driving as well as in a crash.

Once your child outgrows the forward-facing car seat with a harness, it's time to travel in a booster seat, but still in the back seat.

Keep children younger than 13 in the back seat and away from front air bags. The back seat is the safest place for all children to ride.



Questions? Visit www.800buckleup.org or call the **Safety Restraint Coalition** 1-800-BUCK-L-UP (1-800-282-5587)

Begin to teach your child street safety

Stay close to your child and hold his hand when you are near parked or moving cars. At this age, children:

- Move fast and can run into the street without warning.
- Don't know safety rules and need grown-ups to look out for them.
- Are small and hard for drivers to see, especially when they're backing up.
- Can't judge how fast a car is moving or how close or far away it is.

Keep your child away from traffic. Fenced yards, parks, or playgrounds are good places to ride and play. Set a good example. When walking, talk to your child about street safety. Show your child how to cross the street safely but remember that your child is still too young to do this by himself.

Know first aid and child CPR

Emergency skills give you practical ways to help a child who is injured or choking. Learn these skills before you need them! To find out about first aid or child CPR classes, call your local fire department, health department, American Red Cross chapter, or hospital. You can also call the American Heart Association at 1-877-242-4277 (1-877-AHA-4CPR). Make sure your child care provider also has this training.